INDIANA COLLECTION
Gary Public Library
FOR REFERENCE ONLY

90 Years of Library Service: From Dewey to the Database



Gary Public Library's 90th Anniversary and the Friends of the Gary Public Library's 40th Anniversary *Dinner Gala*

Thursday, October 15, 1998

Marquette Park Pavilion On-the-Lagoon
1 North Grand Boulevard, Gary, IN

Special Guest - Best Selling Author
E. Lynn Harris

5:30-6:45pm Book Signing - Silent Auction - Hors d'oeuvres
7pm Dinner Cash Bar

Proceeds will benefit the Friends of the Gary Public Library Scholarship Fund

Gary Public Library

1908-1998

Ora L. Wildermuth, Founder

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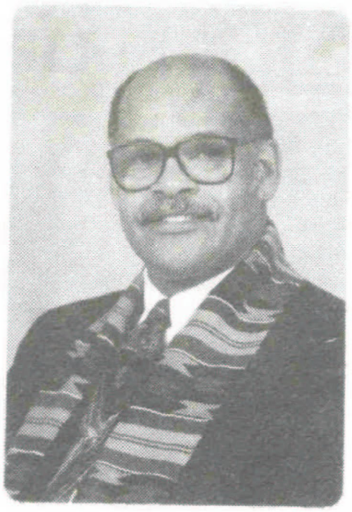
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GARY PUBLIC LIBRARY
1908



September 30, 1998

The Board of Trustees would like to thank personally, the staff, patrons and administration for catapulting the Gary Public Library into its 90th Anniversary.

From the beginning, the Gary Public Library as a reference library led the way in Lake County: We pause again before entering a new frontier of technology and information systems, to make our GLOBAL REACH WITH A LOCAL TOUCH.

We will take from our history of service to this community the best ideas and make them known. Our goals will be clear as the People's University interacts through its Internet system and Literacy programs with the Gary Community School Cooperation, business community, government, parents, students and community. Our libraries will become SMART COMMUNITIES where we can connect globally. Our greatest expectation can become our possibilities.

HAVE A GREAT ANNIVERSARY !

Extending the Possibilities,

President, Board of Trustees
Gary Public Library

GARY PUBLIC LIBRARY

220 w. 5th avenue
(219) 886-2484

gary, indiana 46402
FAX (219) 882-9528

RODNEY J. LEE
DIRECTOR

October 15, 1998



The Administration wishes to thank the Gary Public Library Board of Trustees, the Gary Public Library Friends, the staff and our patrons for your continued support during the past years. Fiscal Year 1998 is a year of celebration, reflection and planning at the Gary Public Library . As we mark 90 years of service to the people of Gary, it is amazing to look back and see how we have changed; it is exciting to predict the "library of the future," but we perceive that the printed word and traditional books will still remain a part of our lives for years to come. In spite of the Library's fiscal constraints in the late 1980's and early 1990's - a period that we are still recovering - the Library never relented in its services to fulfill the informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs and interests of the people of Gary. The support we have received from our Friends throughout the years, have continued or improved many of our services. We applaud their efforts and value their support.

In our 90th year, we stand at an exciting vantage point; it is the beginning of a new technological era for libraries across the country. The Library is committed to exploring the cutting-edge technology that will help people seeking information or ideas. Technology's greatest value is how it can be used in getting information to the user as quickly as possible. At the present moment, the Gary Public Library is in the midst of an installation of an Internet/Intranet System, connecting all of its facilities to the Internet and the World Wide Web. During 1998, our goal is to provide access to this exciting technology system-wide. It is essential to the continued vitality of our community that we do not permit a class of "informationally disadvantaged" individuals to continue to develop into the next century. At the same time, we are aggressively developing our book collection so that Gary remains a City of readers.

However, as library administrators review the onset of the new millennium, the rate of growth of information technology and the rapidity with which information is becoming available in the new electronic/optical formats leads us to realize that we do not have the luxury of a leisurely adjustment to this new environment. Other factors also contribute to the urgency to consider a whole new set of management issues. Aside from the changing characteristics of education and communication, most libraries face altered financial prospects. Financing of libraries of all types is in jeopardy, because of a national mood of reduced support for public services, tax abatements, extraordinary inflationary trends in the cost of information, growth of the influence of commercial publishers, development of a truly global information economy and changes in the world political and economic order all contribute to this changing environment. As we move toward the 21st century, how library boards and managers deal with these new issues will do much to determine the evolving character of the library of the future.

Together, a combination of empowered staff, state-of-the-art technology and innovative programming will serve as a foundation for outstanding service as the Library faces the challenges of the new millennium.

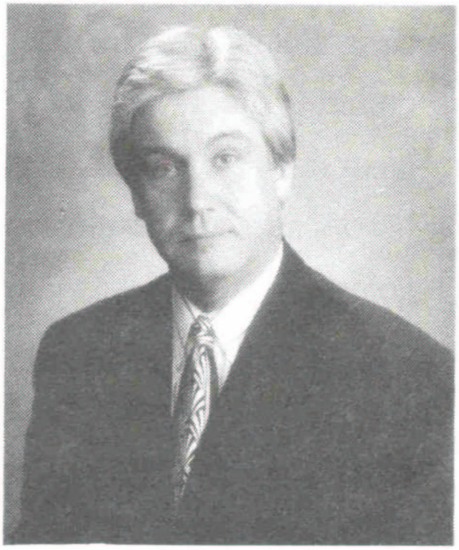
Sincerely,

Rodney J. Lee

Rodney J. Lee

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
GARY, INDIANA 46402 - 1236

SCOTT L. KING
MAYOR



OCTOBER 15, 1998

MR. RODNEY J. LEE, DIRECTOR
GARY PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY BOARD AND STAFF

FRIENDS OF THE GARY PUBLIC LIBRARY

ON BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE CITY OF GARY, I TAKE PLEASURE IN CELEBRATING YOUR 90th ANNIVERSARY OF SERVICE, AS THE GARY PUBLIC LIBRARY MOVES INTO THE 21st CENTURY.

"FROM DEWEY TO THE DATABASE" IS CERTAINLY A BEFITTING EXPRESSION TO ACCENTUATE THE BIRTH AND NUMEROUS CHANGES THAT HAVE OCCURRED WITHIN OUR PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM.

THE WORKS OF CHARLES DICKENS, EDGAR ALLAN POE AND SCORES OF THE OLD MASTERS WERE FIRST INTRODUCED TO ME ON THE SHELVES OF MY NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY.

I WARMLY EMBRACE THE MEMORIES OF MY YOUNG LIBRARY DAYS, AND I COMMEND YOUR STRONG AND PROVEN COMMITMENT TO OUR GOOD CITY, AND ENCOURAGE YOU TO KEEP EVERYBODY READING!

SINCERELY,

SCOTT L. KING, MAYOR
CITY OF GARY

In behalf of the Friends of the Gary Public Library, I extend heart-felt congratulations to the staff and supporters of the Gary library system in enduring ninety years of serving our community. Truly, this is an observance of great significance that all of Northwest Indiana can be proud of as we scan the history and contributions of the library. I am happy to play a part in this on-going activity and gala festivity.

I am also honored to serve as president (for the second time) of the active support group known as the Friends of the Gary Library. The "Friends" are celebrating our 40th year anniversary simultaneous with the library's 90th year. Thus, with two reasons to rejoice, we have a double-barreled prescription to indulge in commemorative delight. As we enter the next millennium, we are prepared to meet the new challenge armed with the confidence and professionalism garnered from the experiences of our proud past.

Again, congratulations on ninety years to the Gary Public Library, and "thank you" for forty years of hands-on involvement to the Friends of the Library. May God continue to smile upon these efforts.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Solomon Dye
President, Friends of the Library
Pastor, Holy Bethel M.B. Church



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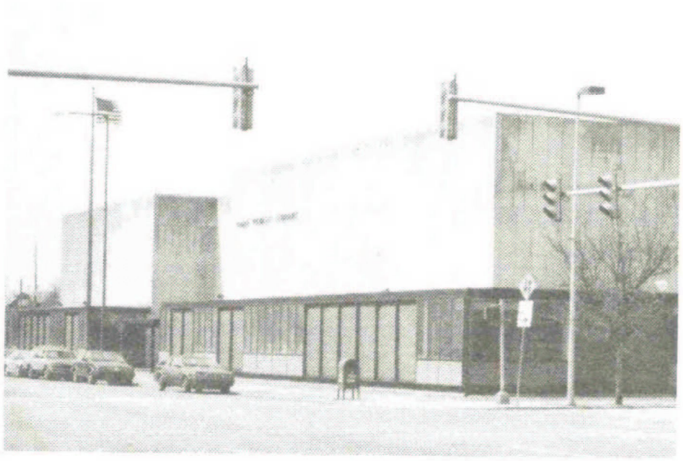
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Gary Public Library

A History of the Gary Public Library and its Branches by James B. Hibbard, Indiana Room/Reference Librarian



Introduction

Gary Public Library's first ninety years are a chronicle of interesting people and events that have contributed to its storied history. In 1944, Orpha Maud Peters, the assistant librarian and first historian of Gary Public Library, summed up the essence of what has made the library so effective over the years: "SERVICE, in the broadest, truest sense of the word was the basis on which the library was founded." In providing that service, Gary Public Library has become, what all great public libraries do become, the cultural center of its community.

A few words should be said concerning the 90th Anniversary theme: "90 Years of Library History: From Dewey to the Database." Gary Public Library's 90th Anniversary Committee chose this theme because we believe that it best expresses the changes that have occurred in public libraries during our ninety years of existence.

When Gary Public Library was officially established in 1908, Melvil Dewey was the most influential force in the library field. It was Dewey who developed the Dewey Decimal Classification system (the classification system that most public libraries still use for maintaining bibliographic control), helped establish the American Library Association, established the Library Journal (the first library periodical), and started the first library school, all before 1900. In short, his influence was immeasurable.

At this end of Gary Public Library's 90 year history, the most influential force has been library automation. Most noticeably, online databases have replaced the old card catalogs. Many other technologies have also become common place: magazine and newspaper databases, computer labs, fax machines, and so forth. The influence of these modern technological marvels has also been immeasurable. Dewey and database just seemed to express it the best. We hope you agree.

The story of Gary Public Library (GPL) actually began in 1906, on the sands of Lake Michigan. Gary, founded in April 1906, had grown large enough by the fall to support a school house, which was located on Broadway north of 4th Avenue, in the shadow of the steel mill. Its school teacher, Ora L. Wildermuth, was approached by a group of local ladies who recommended, as he was to later recall, "the need of reading matter for the children during the long winter evenings." In order to raise the necessary funds for the books, "They proposed an oyster supper and asked to use the school house." Wildermuth agreed. An oyster supper was held in late October or early November and it raised enough money to purchase a few books.

Wildermuth, by virtue of supervising the whole operation, became the first librarian. As such, he housed the books in the schoolhouse and, after the kids cataloged them, had them circulating among the school children in short order. One of the interesting artifacts remaining from this period is the little notebook used by Wildermuth to record who checked out a book. From it you can see that John Zeuk was the first person to borrow a book from the new library.

The library, in Wildermuth's words, "blundered on" for the next year-and-a-half. Finally, a library board was organized under the aegis of the school board. The library board first met on March 30, 1908, and it was "Moved by Ora L. Wildermuth that we have a Public Library and that the Board proceed to arrange for the same." The motion carried and with it Gary Public Library became official.

Carnegie Library

The first library director of GPL, Louis J. Bailey, started working out of a rented storeroom at 31 West 7th Avenue on September 1, 1908. After three months of organizing the library (purchasing books, magazines, furniture, and so forth), Bailey opened it to the public on Dec. 1, 1908. The library had a total of 936 volumes and 75 magazines in its collection. It remained at its 7th Avenue location until the summer of 1911, when it was moved to 620 Washington.

That move, though, was just a temporary one. In the spring of 1910, Gary Public Library was awarded a substantial grant of $50,000 (later increased to $65,000) for the construction of a main library building from Andrew Carnegie, the former steel magnate turned public library philanthropist.

Built on the northwest corner of Adams and 5th Avenue, the completed 1½ story library opened on November 17, 1912. Architecturally, it was built in the Classical Revival style. Constructed out of Bedford Stone, its southern entrance had a series of paired, engaged columns supporting a massive entablature.

The focal point of the interior was the Delivery Room. Positioned in the center of the library, it contained the circulation/reference desk. The room itself, bordered by oak columns, rose 1½ stories to the ceiling, which had skylights in it. In addition, the library had an auditorium and club rooms for public use. In 1939, after twenty-seven years of use, the building was subsequently enlarged on its west side for $70,000, financed in part by the Public Works Administration.

Gary Public Library's Collection

Besides collecting general nonfiction and fiction works, GPL's collection over the years has emphasized several areas. First, materials on scientific and technical subjects that directly related to "the industry of the city" were purchased and circulated. Second, local history had been a priority from the beginning and materials relating "to the founding and growth of Gary" have been collected. Third, foreign-language books were purchased for Gary's immigrant population. Fourth, the library has also been a United States Government Documents Depository since 1944. And finally, children's materials have been stressed.

Since World War II the change in Gary's demographics has shifted the emphasis of the collection in a couple of ways. With the assimilation of the immigrant population into the mainstream of society, the emphasis of foreign-language materials has gradually

lessened, though GPL still has a Latin Studies Collection. By the mid-1970's, however, in response to the growing African American population in Gary, the library established its Black Studies Collection. This collection has become very substantial since then and continues to be used by local patrons and people from all over the Midwest.

Work with Children

From the beginning GPL's work with children has stood out. It has encompassed much more than just books. As early as 1916, long before the age of video, GPL, with the assistance of the Cosmo Theater, presented a series of Saturday morning movies for children shown at that theater. The cost was five cents per child. Some of the other things that have entertained and educated the children have been storytelling, puppet shows, games, and toys.

In keeping with the tradition of providing children with different experiences, the Children's Room at the Main Library also has a special doll house. Built in 1947 and donated to the library in 1972, the doll house, constructed with California redwood, is a 2-½ story dwelling with eleven-rooms. At present, plans are under way to restore it.

GPL's work with children, moreover, has extended into the schools. Since the library opened it has provided supplementary reading books in the classrooms, conducted library tours, and even offered a library course for credit to 9th graders. By the mid-1930's, many of the schools started to establish their own libraries and GPL's school service was correspondingly scaled back. The work, though, of providing supplementary reading books for school assignments and so forth continues on today

Nonprint Materials

In terms of nonprint materials, GPL has offered a diverse selection for its patrons over the years. In the early years, GPL circulated photographs, paintings, sculptures, lantern slides (the forerunner of the modern photographic slide), stereographs (two nearly identical photographs placed side-by-side on a cardboard backing that when viewed through a stereoviewer gives the appearance of the third dimension), and music rolls.

In keeping with the times the library has continuously updated its nonprint materials. During World War II the library started its 16-millimeter film collection. In 1950, GPL offered record albums to its patrons for the first time. By the 1980's and 1990's GPL started offering videos, CD-ROM music discs, and talking books.

In conjunction with the nonprint materials the library has also had a tradition of putting on displays and special programs for the public. Some of its early displays were of historical objects, local art work, photographs, and so forth. Its special programs were usually musical in nature.

One of those music programs even received national press coverage. In early 1914, in an effort to promote its music roll collection, GPL had a noted player piano expert conduct a series of recitals, demonstrating the proper use of a player piano and music rolls. Those recitals were picked up by the Chicago Tribune and the Christian Science Monitor, with the latter favorably commenting that GPL "is the pioneer in giving such recitals in the United States."

City Branches

From the start, because of Gary's large geographic size, the library board knew that in order to provide effective library service to the citizens of Gary, GPL would have to establish branch libraries in the outlying areas of the city. One criterion for establishing a branch was the need to provide the school children with books. That was why most of the branches were originally located near schools.

The branches were established in the following order:

Tolleston, 1910
Emerson School, 1913
Miller (later Wildermuth), 1914
Glen Park (later Kennedy), 1915
Bailey, 1918
Roosevelt, 1923
Alcott, 1924
East Side, 1930
Gary Works, 1938
Brunswick, 1959
Du Bois, 1979

In addition to the individual branches, GPL also extended library service to fire stations, hospitals, shut-ins and so forth. This service was originally provided in the form of a library branch or station placed in the institution, or by a visiting librarian. The Extension Department continues this service today, with a visiting librarian.

Township Service

Another area of librarianship that put GPL in the forefront of public libraries was its township service. In 1913 the library board decided to extend library services to the rural townships of Lake County that did not have library service. GPL was able to do this under the Township Support Act of 1911. As Orpha Maud Peters explained, the service gave the township the advantages of highly trained technical supervision and access to a large collection of books at a very low cost." GPL provided this service, including service to all township schools, to all or part of the following townships:

Hobart, 1913, with branches at Hobart and East Gary
Calumet, 1914, with branches at Ross and Griffith
St. John, 1918, with branches at Dyer and Schererville
Westchester (Porter County), 1919, with a branch at Chesterton
Hanover, 1939, with a branch at Cedar Lake
North, 1939, with branches at Munster and Highland
Ross, 1939, serviced by a traveling branch

Township service lasted through 1958, when the townships separated from GPL and formed their own library system: the Lake County Public Library. The Westchester Branch was the one exception. GPL continued to provide library service there until the summer of 1972, when it too separated and organized itself into the Westchester Public Library.

GPL's township service made it a nationally-recognized public library. More important, though, the library benefits received by the townships from GPL were invaluable, enriching the lives of countless residents and establishing public library service that has been continued.

Trailer & Bookmobile Service

To provide library service to such a large area, the city of Gary and eventually seven townships, GPL not only opened up branches, but also began a traveling branch service. The first traveling branch was a small house trailer converted into a library. Having a capacity of 2, 000 volumes, it was a very cost-effective way of providing library service to the outlying areas without tying up a library vehicle. When it was started, in 1937, it was hailed by the press as "the only known trailer library in the U.S.A." It was successful enough that a second, larger trailer was put into service in 1942.

In 1951 the library put its first bookmobile into service. This service continued to expand to the point that by the mid-1950's GPL had the largest fleet of traveling branches in the state: two trailers, two bookmobiles, and two trucks. After the township service ended, however, the need for the service decreased and eventually GPL reduced its fleet to just one bookmobile.

War Activities

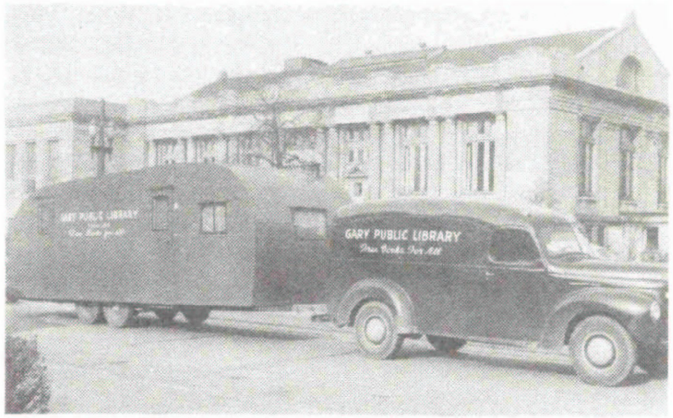
GPL also became very active during both World Wars. World War I saw the Red Cross use one of the library's club rooms for its surgical dressings department. GPL also was involved in book drives for the troops and bond drives to help finance the war. During World War II the library showed war films, converted part of the basement into an air raid shelter, and, as mentioned before, became a United States Government Document Depository. During both World Wars and the Korean War, the library directors left GPL to assist in the war efforts.

Circulation

The following sampling of circulation statistics of library materials over the last ninety years illustrates just how effective GPL's library practices have been.

Year	Circulation
1909	39,095
1911	105,101
1913	204,461
1921	520,496
1930	644,560
1932	942,652
1940	1,022,645
1958	1,168,404
1982	452,729
1994	1,001,838

From the above statistics it can be seen that GPL has been successful. Its 1909 circulation placed it in fourteenth place among Indiana public libraries. By 1913, just four years later, it was second in the state, behind only to Indianapolis. It achieved this at a time when Gary was only the 8th largest populated city in Indiana, behind such cities as Evansville, Fort Wayne, South Bend, and Terre Haute. The Depression, interestingly enough, had a beneficial effect on circulation: the unemployed read in their spare time. The library reached a million in circulation for the first time in 1940. After the townships separated in 1958, the circulation decreased but by 1994 reached a million again.



New Main Library

The most pressing issue that faced GPL after World War II was the space limitation of the original Carnegie library building. Even before the end of the war, the extra space provided by the 1939 addition had been hopelessly overcrowded.

The main question to be decided was whether the old Carnegie library should be enlarged again or replaced by a new library building. As early as 1944 it was proposed that a new library building be built as a "memorial library" to honor the Gary veterans of World War II. This plan, though, was shelved. By 1950 actual plans had been drawn up for the enlargement of the original building; however, the Korean War put that project on hold.

The turning point to the question over whether GPL should enlarge or build new came in 1955 when an independent library consulting firm determined that the original building was beyond repair and recommended that a new library building should be built. The library board agreed and, from that time on, GPL's efforts were focused on building a new main library.

The library decided to finance the new building by selling bonds. The problem with this was, that while the 1947 Library Law allowed libraries to sell bonds, the law had yet to be tested in the courts. And until the law was proved to be constitutional, the bonding companies would not issue any bonds.

At this point, the Friends of Gary Public Library became involved. The first major project the Friends undertook was to test the constitutionality of the 1947 Library Law with a "friendly" lawsuit. The lawsuit went all the way to the Indiana State Supreme Court, which ruled, in November 1960, that libraries could sell bonds for construction projects.

With that decided, movement on the new library proceeded quickly. In May 1962, the library was moved to temporary quarters at 739 Washington Street. The old Carnegie library, which was in its fiftieth year of service, was soon torn down, and a new library was constructed at the same location.

The new Main Library was opened to the public on May 4, 1964. It was constructed of Indiana limestone at a total cast of $2.2 million, and was the latest in library design. Its most outstanding feature was the space that it afforded the library to conduct its business efficiently: an auditorium, conference rooms, two floors for shelving, and a full basement.

Loose Ends

Over the years GPL has been involved in the forefront of many library activities. One of the more popular ones, for example, was the Great Books course, originally sponsored by the University of Chicago. The courses, similar to today's book discussion groups, studied and discussed the works of Plato, Shakespeare, Machiavelli, Locke, and so forth. Started in 1945, the courses continued at GPL well into the 1970's.

One activity of monumental proportions was the newspaper indexing project. Sponsored by GPL, a crew of thirteen persons working for the Works Progress Administration indexed all of the Gary and Lake County newspapers from 1907 through 1939. The Project was finished in 1941.

In terms of technology, the 1980's and 1990's saw GPL embark into the computer age and the library became automated. Among other things, the catalog was put online, bibliographic databases were installed, and personal computers were made available to the public.

The latest development in the technological field was the Gates Library Foundation Opportunity Grant of $48,900 that the library received in early 1998 for an Internet lab at the Du Bois Branch.

Conclusion

With this latest grant, GPL has come full circle. The library was fortunate enough to receive a grant from Andrew Carnegie, the first patron saint of public libraries, which enabled it to be a leader during the twentieth century. It has now received a grant from Bill Gates, arguably the second patron saint of public libraries, which will enable it to be a leader in the twenty-first century.

W.E.B. Du Bois Branch Library

The history of the W.E.B. Du Bois Branch Library is actually a history of four branches: Du Bois and the three that it replaced: Bailey, Roosevelt and Alcott.

The midtown area served by these branches was originally known as the "melting pot" of Gary. It served as home to many of the new immigrants, and other people who came to Gary in search of work. Unlike the downtown area which (through the auspices of the Gary Land Company) was developed in an orderly manner, the midtown area was developed haphazardly. With no building codes, plenty of saloons, and poor police protection, it had a "wild west" feel to it in the early days. It was during that "wild west" phase that GPL first embarked into providing library service to the area.



Bailey Branch

Gary Public Library (GPL) established its first branch in the midtown area in 1913. On April 3 of that year it opened a branch in the new Froebel School. Its first librarian was Miss Anna Gibson. Called the Froebel School Branch, its principal patronage consisted of the school children. The branch was, moreover, intended for the adults, and so, in order to circulate adult materials, the librarian would suggest "that the children take books for their parents as well as for themselves." The system, surprisingly, worked well enough for the adult circulation to be 25% of the total circulation of the branch.

By 1916, with the branch outgrowing its school quarters and Froebel School wanting to use the space for its own purposes, GPL decided to build its own branch building. The site selected was at 15th and Madison, also the original site of the old Gibson Inn erected in 1837.

To finance the building, GPL turned to the Carnegie Corporation for a grant. At first the corporation was reluctant to approve a grant for a building that would be relatively close to the Main Library. GPL library director, Louis J. Bailey, however, explained that the Main Library was already being used to capacity and that the midtown area had a large foreign population that needed library services. Satisfied with this, the Carnegie Corporation awarded a grant of $25,000 for a midtown branch building in early 1917.

The building, designed by A. F. Wickes, a local architect, was designed in the Colonial Revival style. It was constructed of brick and came complete with Palladian windows on its gabled ends and an iron fence out front, manufactured by Gary's Union Foundry Works. Inside it had a main reading room on the ground floor and an auditorium and two club rooms in the basement.

The branch opened on January 6, 1918, even though a snow storm canceled the opening festivities. It was named the Louis J. Bailey Branch, after the first professional library director of GPL.

Right from the start GPL promoted the branch to the immigrant population of the area by purchasing foreign language books for its collection and permitting the International Institute (I.I.) to use its basement for its headquarters. The I.I., a group that helped new immigrants adjust to life in the United States, made the branch, through its activities, a focal point for immigrants. Every day it held meetings, English classes and so forth. The International Institute remained in the branch until 1964, when it was relocated to the then vacant, East Side Branch.

Roosevelt Branch

Even while the Bailey Branch was being established, GPL, recognizing that the area around 25th Avenue was in need of a full-fledged branch, began the process of opening its second branch library in the midtown area: Roosevelt.

As early as 1914 GPL had established a circulating station in the 24th Street School. In 1918 this station was moved to a new school building at 25th & Tyler. And now, in 1922 with the Roosevelt Annex School being build near 25th & Jackson, GPL decided to build a branch library next to it.

Because the Carnegie Corporation was no longer donating monies for library buildings (the last grant was made in 1919) GPL had to finance the cost of this branch building itself. The total cost of it was approximately $8,000, furniture in all. Its architect was Joseph Wildermuth, also a local architect. Like Bailey Branch, it was also designed in the Colonial Revival style. It was constructed of brick and had an off-center entrance on its east end.

It was officially opened on January 25, 1923, with Margaret Schrock as its first librarian. Right from the start its high circulation justified the need for the branch. In fact, its circulation, with a daily average of 370 books, was virtually the highest rate of any branch in the GPL system.

By 1941, after years of grow in the area, GPL decided that the branch needed to be expanded to meet the expanded library needs of the community. At a cost of $6,575, the Roosevelt Branch was nearly doubled. A near-identical wing was added on to its east end, thereby virtually centering its once off-center entrance. It was dedicated on September 21, 1941. The main speaker at the dedication was the principal of Roosevelt High School: H. Theo Tatum.

Alcott Branch

After Roosevelt opened in 1923, GPL turned its attention to opening a branch in the community on the east side of Broadway. To this end, GPL rented a storeroom at 1714 Connecticut for $30.00 a month in 1924. The branch was named in honor of Louisa May Alcott, the author of Little Women. When it opened on August 1st, it had about 1,000 volumes and its first librarian was Mrs. Etka Gaskin.

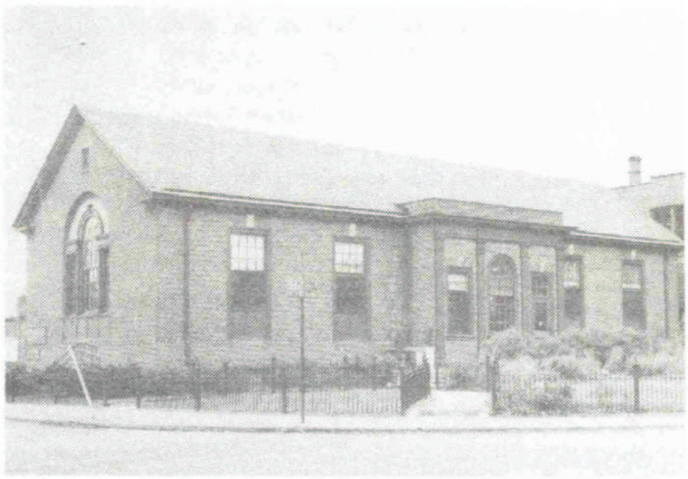
In its first years of operation, most of Alcott's patrons were school children. With the St. Hedwig School right across the street and Pulaski and Virginia Street schools nearby, the children naturally used the branch. One of those children who came in and used the branch was a tall girl who was learning to play piano, had a beautiful voice, and heart of gold, Miss Geneva Davis. You might know her by her married name: Mrs. Geneva Gamble, the Co-chairperson of the GPL 90th Anniversary Committee, who is also celebrating her 90th birthday this year.

The Alcott Branch, unlike Bailey or Roosevelt, was destined never to be housed it in own permanent building. In 1928 the branch was moved just a block south to another rented storeroom, at 1800 Connecticut. It remained there until 1938, when it was moved to 1701 Maryland. Interestingly, the building that it was moved into was an old portable building that had once housed the Glen Park (now Kennedy) Branch.

Because the old portable was in poor shape, GPL intended to only house the Alcott Branch in it until a new building could be built. In the winter of 1941-42 GPL raised the funds for the new building, had the plans drawn up, and even awarded the contract to a contractor to build the new Alcott Branch Library. But World War II intervened. The War Production Broad refused to allow GPL to build the building because it was not considered an "emergency enterprise." Winning World II was a higher priority.

In keeping with the spirit of the times, GPL invested the $20,000 that it had earmarked for the new Alcott Branch building into Series F War Bonds. Ora Wildermuth, the library board president, got the enviable role of presenting the $20,00 check to movie star Dorothy Lamour when she was in Gary on a war bond drive in May 1942. (Incidentally, in 1953 GPL cashed the bond and used it to help finance the construction of the first Wildermuth Branch Library in Miller.)

In June 1942, with the old portable building considered beyond repair, the Alcott Branch was moved to another storeroom. This one was located at 1649 Delaware. It remained there until 1956, when it was moved to 703 East 21st Street, which was to be its final location.



Du Bois Branch

As early as the mid-1940s, change was on the horizon for the three branches. The branches, as originally established, had served relatively stationary but growing communities dependant upon the street car system for transportation. By the end of World War II, however, the mobility afforded to the average person by the automobile had changed all of that: the last street car ran in Gary in September 1946; people were on the move; correspondingly, the circulation statistics at the three branches were not increasing as they should be and, in some cases, were even decreasing.

In short, the branches had become too small to serve adequately, let alone attract, an ever increasingly mobile and sophisticated population. What was needed was one large state-of-the-art branch with adequate materials and staff that could better serve the midtown area than three small branches.

To its credit, GPL recognized that this problem existed. An in-house study conducted in 1948 recommended "The building of one large central district branch on Broadway in place of Alcott, Bailey and Roosevelt."

Unbeknownst to GPL, it would be another thirty-one long years before that recommendation came to fruition. Delayed for one reason or another, it was not until 1967 that the issue was seriously brought up again. In October of that year a professional study, commissioned by GPL, recommended that the new midtown branch be placed on the west side of Broadway between 17th and 19th streets. In July 1969 the library board, acting on that recommendation, selected the northwest corner of 19th and Broadway as the future site of the midtown branch.

That site, however, was opposed by the Model Cities Residents Committee (MCRC), a midtown citizen's group. MCRC wanted the northwest corner of 21st and Broadway. In early 1970 the board agreed to change it to MCRC's proposed location. That location, though, was subsequently found to be unsuitable for a library (it was too close to the railroad tracks and power lines). Finally, in November 1972 all parties agreed to the northeast corner of 19th and Broadway.

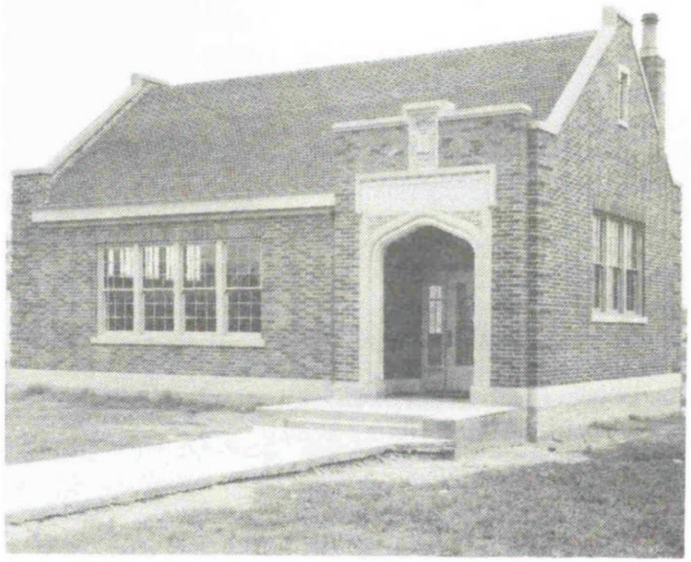
It would be almost another seven years before the new branch was opened. Purchasing the site, floating the necessary bond issue to finance the project, and approval of the design of the branch all took time. In June, 1977 the groundbreaking took place, and after two years of construction, the midtown library fully opened. The branch was named for W.E.B. Du Bois, the great literary giant and founder of the NAACP and The Crisis magazine.

Designed by the local architectural firm of Premil and Associates, the W.E.B. Du Bois Branch opened on July 15, 1979. At a cost of approximately $1.6 million, the midtown residents finally got a branch library that they deserved. It had everything from an art gallery and a fireplace to an auditorium and space for 30,000 volumes.

The construction of the Du Bois Branch spelled the end for the other three branches. Bailey closed first in 1977 and, when Du Bois opened in 1979, Alcott and Roosevelt were both closed.

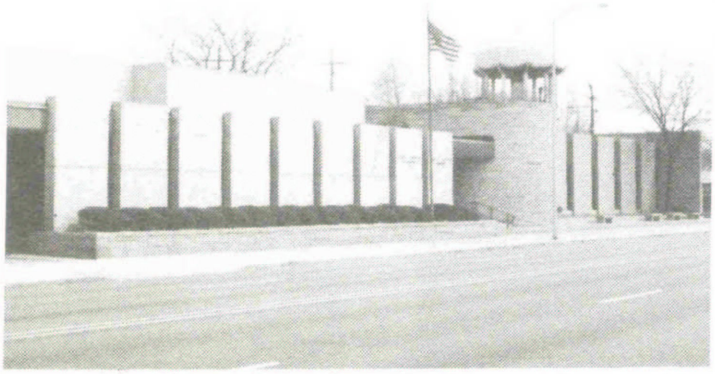
Since the Du Bois Branch opened, it has remained, with only minor changes, essentially the same. In 1998 GPL received an Opportunity Grant from the Gates Library Foundation, which will be used for a computer lab with Internet access at Du Bois.

Since July 1998, Mrs. Koku S. Lwanga has been head of the Du Bois Branch. She has worked for GPL since 1992 in various positions, including head of the Brunswick Branch, reference librarian at the Main Library and acting head of the Tolleston Branch.



Pictured: Bailey Branch (upper left)
Roosevelt Branch (above)

John F. Kennedy Library



The history of the Kennedy (formerly Glen Park) Branch library is twofold. For its first thirty years, geography, transportation and economics unwittingly conspired to make it, for lack of a better term, the stepchild of Gary Public Library (GPL). Since then, however, it has become an increasingly important branch in the library's system.

When Glen Park was annexed by Gary in 1909, it was a sparsely settled area consisting of a small settlement at Ridge Road and a few scattered farms (the 1910 U.S. Census listed it with just 1,363 people). Its geographic location, south of the Little Calumet River, tended to isolate it from the rest of Gary (its only direct link with Gary was the Broadway bridge). It, moreover, did not get streetcar service until 1912. These factors led to a slow development of Glen Park.

Not surprisingly, it was not until 1914 that Glen Park received its first library service. It came in the form of a circulating station for the school children at Glen Park School, still located at the southwest corner of 39th & Broadway. A year later, in June 1915, a branch for adults was established in Theodore Nering's grocery store, located south of the school on the same block. In between selling produce and stocking the shelves, Nering's wife, Elsie, carried out the librarian duties.

Within four years, however, the needs of the branch outgrew the small store. In 1919 GPL purchased six lots for $4,500 on the east side of Broadway, the present site of Kennedy Branch. GPL purchased a portable building, placed it on one of the lots and opened it as a branch in May. According to the library's first historian, Orpha Maud Peters, this portable building was "the first in Indiana to be used for library purposes." Miss Doris Hill was the first librarian of this new branch.

Over the next nineteen years this portable building would serve as the Glen Park Branch. It had enough room in it for a children's section,an adult reading area, and shelving. During the 1920's, Glen Park experienced an economic boom. Its population increased from 2,887 in 1920 to 15,974 by 1930. Immigrants from Europe accounted for part of this increase. The branch responded by providing them with reading materials in their own languages: Croatian, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Serbian, and so forth.

In the face of such an increase, the portable soon became inadequate to the needs of the community. A larger building was urgently needed, but the Depression of the 1930's cut back on many library projects and services, including the construction of a larger branch for Glen Park. The librarians of the branch tried to look at it philosophically. As early as 1923, for example, one wrote: "Some day, of course, we hope to have a real library building in Glen Park but, while we have only a portable, we shall try to make it as attractive as possible." This did not, however, stop patrons from complaining about it to the librarians; one even wrote to the Gary Post-Tribune and called it a "shack."

In 1936 the library board, well aware of the problem, applied for and received a Public Works Administration grant of $18,450. More than matching this with $22, 550 of its own money, GPL constructed a new 2,754 square foot branch library in Glen Park.

It opened its doors January 24, 1938 and was an attractive brick building, constructed in the Art Deco architectural style. Its one-way traffic pattern around the circulation desk (incoming and outgoing patrons used different doors) was hailed by a visiting librarian as "most modern." It also had another modern convenience: air conditioning, the first in any GPL library building. The community immediately took to the new branch; over 500 people went through its doors the first day alone.

This building served as the branch for more than twenty years without alteration. By the early 1960's, however, with the population of Glen Park having increased significantly, plans were in the works to expand the Glen Park Branch. But before they came to fruition, a national tragedy occurred: President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. In the wake of this tragedy, the library board voted unanimously to rename the Glen Park Branch the John F. Kennedy Branch "in honor of the late President."

The expansion of Kennedy was finally started in 1965. When it was completed in 1966, the addition to the branch nearly tripled Kennedy in size. The architect achieved symmetry and balance between the old and new sections of the Kennedy Branch in an interesting way. By making the window openings on the Broadway side of the addition full length, a columnar effect was created in each section of the remaining brick wall. Correspondingly, the Broadway side of the original 1938 building was partially hidden by a series of granite blocks separated just enough to recreate the columnar affect. Then, as a finishing touch, the old and new sections were joined by a protruding semi-circular structure of rusticated blocks.

In terms of the interior, except for an area reserved for a meeting room, the original 1938 part of the branch was closed off to the public and turned over to staff use. The new addition now housed all of the public space. The addition included an adult reading room, a browsing/casual reading area in the semi-circular room, a children's room, and a patio for patron use. The cost of this expansion project, including furniture, was $450,000.

Since then, besides some changes in furniture, the Kennedy Branch has remained essentially the same. Today it continues to serve a vital role in providing the people of the Glen Park community with library services. The current librarian is Dorothy Swain, a GPL employee for the past thirty-five years.

Next time you visit Kennedy Branch, please take a moment and view a little of its history. From the Broadway entrance, look north through the grillwork to see the front of the original 1938 branch library. If you look southwest across Broadway, you will see a two-story brown-brick building with the name NERING on a plaque near the top of the structure. That was Nering's grocery store, the site of GPL's first library branch in Glen Park.

Tolleston Branch Library



The original town of Tolleston predated the founding of Gary by nearly fifty years. Founded in 1857 by George Tolle, a Chicago manufacturer, Tolleston had grown slowly at first, reaching a population of only 500 by 1900. Its residents, however, were primarily of German extraction, and, not surprisingly, in the German library tradition they had established a library for the use of Tolleston's residents sometime before 1910.

Because of that library, Tolleston holds the singular distinction of being the only area of Gary that had a library in existence before GPL established a branch in it.

When the city of Gary annexed Tolleston in 1910, Tolleston's library was incorporated into GPL. Gary library director, Louis J. Bailey, inventoried it, added to it, and opened up a branch in Tolleston's old Town Hall on December 17, 1910. With this opening, Tolleston became the first branch library of GPL with Miss Ann Gibson as its first librarian. The branch's location in the old Town Hall, however, turned out to be only temporary. It would take another seventeen years before Tolleston finally had a permanent home.

Until then, the branch would be relocated several times, into buildings that were within a three-block radius of each other. First in March 1912 to a building on the south side of 10th Place, between Roosevelt and Cleveland streets. Incidentally, it was moved to make way for the construction of Fire Station #3, which replaced the old Town Hall and is still standing at the corner of 12th and Roosevelt. Later the same year it was moved a couple doors to the west into a building on the same street; and in May 1915 it was relocated again into a small storeroom at 2129 W. 11th Street. It remained in that building for the next twelve years.

By the 1920's the area served by the Tolleston Branch had grown considerably, serving approximately 5,000 people. The quarters in the storeroom, correspondingly, had grown woefully inadequate and cramped. In her 1923 report, Cerilla E. Saylor, the Tolleston librarian, wistfully asked: "Could another building...be found?" To buttress her argument she added, "This building has no lavatory facilities. We only recently acquired a wash pan."

The library board did more than that. The very next year, 1924, it selected and purchased, for $3,600, a site for a new library building at 12th and Taft streets. Because of budget constraints, however, it was not until 1927 that GPL had enough money to construct the building. The library's architect, Joseph Wildermuth, designed it in a Romanesque Revival style, complete with arched windows, decorative brick details, a parapet roof, and a skylight. The total cost of the building was approximately $35,000, furniture and all.

Amidst a heavy thunder storm, the branch held its grand opening on September 27, 1927. Both patrons and librarians were pleased with the new building. Besides containing a children's room and adult reading room, it had a work room and staff room. Miss Lyndell Martling, the branch librarian at the time, found these latter two room most appealing. She wrote in her report that "To have a [work] room lined with shelves...is joy complete. A supply cupboard with space enough for supplies to last more than a week is a gift of the gods. And last but not least a Staff Room!! Ah, what more could one ask in way of a library?" The Tolleston Branch had come a long way.

Since then the Tolleston Branch has remained in the same building and served the community with only one major mishap, a July 1975 fire which extensively damaged its interior. As a consequence, the library had to be closed for renovation. While it was being renovated, the bookmobile serviced the area. The branch was reopened in February, 1976.

In terms of its branch librarians, Tolleston has had the unfortunate experience of having two pass away unexpectedly: Miss Zada Grace Fisher in 1915 and Ms. Paulette Evans in 1997.

Currently, Diana Morrow is the head librarian of the Tolleston Branch. For over a decade, Morrow has served as a children's and reference librarian throughout the system.

Next time you visit Tolleston Branch, take a moment and view a little of its history, specifically its many original library furniture and fittings. The circulation / reference desk is original as are the paneled benches and book shelves along the walls. Also original are the radiators built into the book shelves, protected by decorative grillwork. Finally, note the three-shelved, wooden bookcase. It is even older than the building. It was purchased by GPL around 1912.

Library Service in Brunswick

Since 1995 the Brunswick area of Gary has also received its library service from the Tolleston Branch. Before that, GPL had not neglected the area. Over the years it had established circulating stations in the schools for the children and provided bookmobile service for the adults. The main factor that worked against opening a branch was Brunswick's sparse population.

By the mid-1950's, however, with the population on the rise, the Brunswick Community Club started a campaign for the establishment of a branch. This, along with letters from Brunswick residents to the library director, finally paid off. In 1958 the library board set aside the funds necessary to open a branch in 1959.

The site selected for the Brunswick Branch, 5213 West 5th Avenue, was located in a small shopping building. It was officially opened on January 22, 1959. Its first librarian was Mrs. Dannetta Sergison.

The branch remained at that location for another two years. In 1966, the scheduled widening of 5th Avenue, necessitating the demolition of the branch site, caused the branch to be relocated to the Tri-City Plaza, a few blocks to the east. It was located in this plaza for the next twenty-nine years, moving to three different locations within the plaza: 4391, 4435, and finally 4389 .

Brunswick remained at that last location until 1995, when, because of complications with the branch building, it was closed. There is, however, a move underway by the Brunswick Community Organization, a local group, and Gary Public Library to reopen a branch in the Brunswick area in the near future.

Ora L. Wildermuth Branch Library

The history of the Wildermuth Branch Library (formerly Miller Branch) began in 1913 when GPL tendered library services to Miller through its township extension program.

Historically, Miller was a railroad town. Settlement had started shortly after the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern railroad was built through the area in 1851. By 1910 it was still a small town, having a population of only 638 people. It was also relatively isolated: located in Hobart township, its primary out-of-town road led south to the town of Hobart (State Road 51 today). And, not surprisingly, it still did not have a public library. That, however, soon changed.



In 1913, GPL embarked upon an ambitious program of providing library services to the outlying townships of Lake County. It was able to do this under the Township Support Act of 1911. This act, in sum, allowed an established city library to offer library services to any township where at least fifty taxpaying residents signed a petition to summit such library services.

The first township that GPL offered library services to was Hobart township. Orpha Maud Peters, GPL's assistant librarian, approached the Woman's Reading Club of [the town of] Hobart with the idea in the spring of 1913. The ladies responded positively, and through their tireless efforts, more than the required fifty signatures were soon obtained and by the summer GPL officially tended library services to the township. It was not until 1914, though, when GPL actually started providing library services, for it took time to secure the buildings to house the collections. The first branch opened in the township was in the town of Hobart, in January 1914.

As for Miller, by the fall of 1914, GPL was able to open a branch in a house offered by the Miller School Board. It was located in an ideal place, next to the school house on Lake Street. It opened for business on November 14, 1914, with nearly a thousand books in its collection. Miss Florence Nelson was its first librarian. (Incidentally, Florence was only the first of three Nelson sisters to serve as branch heads of Miller: Florence, 1914 to 1917; Helen, 1917 to 1923; and Emily, 1930 to 1936.)

When the school board needed the building in July 1917, the branch was moved to the first floor of 546 S. Lake St., a two-story commercial building. The second floor was used as an apartment. (Today, the building is still located on Lake St.) The location was intended to be temporary, but remained there until 1943.

During that time period, many changes occurred. In December 1918, Miller was annexed by the city of Gary. This eventually brought an end to its isolation from Gary - local roads were improved, the Dunes Highway was opened in 1923, and streetcars from Gary arrived a year later. Even with these improvements, Miller grew slowly, reaching a population of just 2,072 by 1930.

Miller, moreover, was unique among Gary's communities, for it was the only community located on Lake Michigan. This, in turn, made it a community with not only year-around residents but also summer residents. This duo resident situation led to a unique circulation pattern of library materials. During the summer months, when schools were out of session, the overall circulation statistics in the GPL system decreased. At the Miller Branch, however, the opposite happened. The summer residents' use of the branch actually increased its circulation. This circulation phenomenon continued until the end of the 1930's, by which time Miller's population had grown and it had become predominately a year-round community.

By the early 1940's, with Miller's population over 17,000, the branch building had become hopelessly inadequate to meet the community's needs. With space at a premium, the branch could only keep a small collection of popular works on its shelves. That, though, was not its only problem, the branch needed maintenance and repairs.

The upstairs apartment, moreover, presented another problem. As the branch head explained in her 1932 annual report, "Having a family with three small children, two large hunting dogs and a radio living above the library is certainly not ideal."

A new building with modern facilities was clearly needed, but the Depression and, later, World War II had postponed any primary construction project. In an effort to improve its surroundings, the branch was moved twice, each time into larger buildings. In 1943 it moved just two doors down to 566 Lake St., the building which now houses Ming Ling's; and then north to 560 Lake St., in 1946. A mural of Gary's Bath house marks that location. Both places, like the previous location, were rental units.

In 1953, instead of renewing its rental contract, GPL finally went forward with plans to build a branch library building in Miller. Purchasing a site located a block and a half north, at 363 Lake St., construction began in May 1953. The library board named the new branch the Ora L. Wildermuth Library in honor of GPL's first librarian and president of the library board for 35 years. Wildermuth himself laid the cornerstone of the building in August 1953, which is still visible today. The bookmobile served the Miller area while the new building was being constructed.

The branch was completed in early 1954 at a total cost $43,953. Part of the cost was financed with bonds purchased during World War II (see the history of the Du Bois Branch for more information). The building was a single-story brick with an attractive stone facing in the front. Inside it had adult and children's sections and a community room for meetings. Its first librarian was Mrs. Jean Walker.

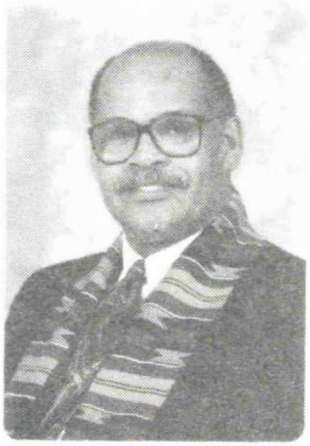
This building served as the branch for nearly twenty years until the library needs of Miller had outgrown it. In 1973 GPL purchased a larger building, the old Tittles Supermarket at 501 Lake St., renovated it and moved in later that November.

In 1989, serious roof problems and more, prompted GPL's decision to build a new building on the same location. The old building was demolished and construction began in October.

The new building was completed and had its grand opening in February 1991. At a cost of $1.6 million, the 13,378 square foot building was modern in every sense. It was equipped with GPL's new on-line catalog, video viewing stations, three meeting rooms, and plenty of room for the book collection. Samuel Custard is the current branch librarian.

Gary Public Library Board of Trustees
1998

The Gary Public Library Board of Trustees is the official governing body of the library. It is made up of seven Gary residents, each appointed for four-year terms by the following appointing authorities: Lake County Council, Gary School Board (3), Mayor of Gary, Gary City Council, and the Lake County Commissioners.



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The Friends of the Gary Public Library



The Friends Executive Board *(pictured left to right)*
Mary Oppman, Patricia Cronin, Jani Gant, Rev. Solomon Dye, Brenda Moore, Mary Mulligan
Not pictured: Diana Alexander, Burnetta Williams, Carolyn Freeland, Maria Strimbu, Rodney Lee

The Friends group acts in the capacity of a "citizens' advisory board," to promote projects that are beneficial to the library and not ordinarily handled with tax money. The Friends also strive to acquaint the citizens with their library and all it has to offer. The Gary Public Library Friends group, moreover, is a part of both state and national Friends organizations.

Organized on January 8, 1958, the catalyst that brought it into existence was the issue of whether the library could sell bonds for the construction of the Main Library. By 1958, Gary Public Library (GPL) had decided to build a new main library building but was having a problem over financing it. The issue in question was the 1947 Library Law. While that law allowed libraries to sell bonds to finance construction projects, its constitutionality had yet to be tested in court. And until it that happened no bonding company would issue the bonds.

This is where the Friends' involvement was crucial. The Friends challenged the law with a "friendly" lawsuit that went all the way to the Indiana Supreme Court. In November 1960 that court ruled that the law was constitutional. The rest is, as they say, history. The Friends' lawsuit not only paved the way for GPL to sell bonds for what became its new Main Library, but for the other libraries across Indiana to do so as well.

While the lawsuit was, of course, a milestone, over its forty-year history, the Friends group has been involved in many other projects and programs. One of its most successful projects has been to present prominent guest speakers for fund-raising events. They started this practice as early as 1958, when they invited a biographer of the famous lawyer Clarence Darrow to speak. By far the Friends' most famous speakers have been Alex Haley, the author of *Roots* and Maya Angelou, the poet. Besides speakers, the Friends also raise funds through book bazaars, photocopier receipts, and membership dues.

The Friends, in turn, give the money back to the library in many ways: book bags, equipment, library programs, special events, artwork, and scholarships. In regards to artwork, the Friends group has been in the forefront. It started the tradition of commissioning sculptures for public display in 1965 with the "Inquisitive Child", a marble statue created for the Main Library's Children's Room. And in the area of scholarships, the Friends group has had a special influence. Its scholarship program, called the Jessie L. Jackson Scholarship Award after its former President, is instrumental in assisting Friends with continuing education toward library related subjects.

In celebrating its 40th Anniversary in conjunction with the Gary Public Library's 90th Anniversary, the Friends continue with its great tradition of establishing closer relations between the library and the public.

Current Friends Membership

as of September 30, 1998

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Friends of the Gary Public Library

Jessie L. Jackson Scholarship

A special Friends project is to raise funds to underwrite scholarship. These scholarships are awarded to Friends to help them with continuing education in the field of Library Science.

In 1989, it was with the leadership of the late Jessie L. Jackson that the Friends reimplemented the scholarship fund. As President of the Executive Board, Mrs. Jackson along with the Friends, the library administration, and staff worked to make her vision a reality. As a tribute to Mrs. Jackson, the Friends have renamed the scholarship in her honor.

1998-99 Scholarship Recipients

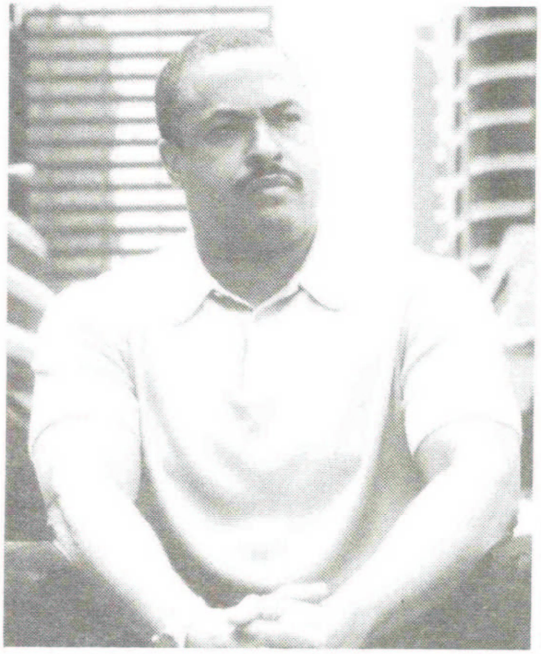
Brenda Davis
Kenneth Green
Dorothy Moore
Beverly Smith

Gary Public Library
Length of Service Awards

Gary Public Library employees with twenty-five or more years of service. In total, there are sixteen employees who together have more than 540 years of service, an average of 33 years each.

44 Years	Nancy Progre
42 Years	Frances Patterson
41 Years	Roma Ivey
	Frank Tokarz
38 Years	Diana Alexander
	Frances Johnson
36 Years	Karen Blocker
35 Years	Dorothy Swain
33 Years	Kathleen Burgess
29 Years	Jeanette McClain
	Pamela Vance
	Helen Wallace
28 Years	Arlene Cohan
	Charlestine Lee
26 Years	Bettye Baker
	Janet Hawkins Guydon

E. Lynn Harris



With the March 1997 publication of his fourth novel, *If This World Were Mine*, ***E. Lynn Harris*** established himself as today's best-selling black male novelist. With appearances on numerous bestseller lists, including *The New York Times, USA Today, Blackboard,* and the *Washington Post, If This World Were Mine* became one of the most talked-about novels of 1997. In *If This World Were Mine*, Harris deftly explores the complex and ever-changing landscape of friendship among human beings and, in his inimitable style, reveals the story of a friendship that can - and must - survive the test of time and conflict, to prosper and grow.

E. Lynn Harris is a former computer sales executive with IBM and an honors graduate of the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville. In 1991, he made a career change that resulted in the best-selling novel, *Invisible Life*, which spent ten months at #1 on the Blackboard Bestseller List of African American Titles. His second novel, *Just As I Am*, was a national bestseller as well, and Harris became the first male writer to have a #1 hardcover novel on the Blackboard List. *Just As I Am* was also awarded the 1996 Novel of the Year prize by the Blackboard African-American Bestsellers, Inc. His third novel, *And This Too Shall Pass*, spent nine weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list. *If This World Were Mine* was a finalist for the 1997 NAACP Image Award and winner of the James Baldwin Award for Literary Excellence.

Harris' writing has appeared in *American Visions, Essence, Go the Way Your Blood Beats* and the award-winning anthology *Brotherman: The Odyssey of Black Men in America.*

An avid University of Arkansas Razorbacks sports fan and college lecturer, Harris currently divides his time between Chicago and New York, where he is working on his fifth novel, *Abide With Me*, to be published by Doubleday in 1999.

Titles by E. Lynn Harris

Invisible Life - 1991

Just As I Am - 1994

And This Too Shall Pass - 1996

If This World Were Mine - 1997

"90 Years of Library History: From Dewey to the Database"

Order of Events

5:30-6:45pm Book Signing; Hors d'oeuvres; Silent Auction of Autographed Catalog Cards, Cash Bar
music by the Gary Civic Youth Orchestra directed by Ron Pickett

Invocation.....Rev. Solomon Dye, President
Friends of the Gary Public Library

Welcome.....Benjamin R. Coleman, President
Gary Public Library Board of Trustees

7pm Dinner Music by Ron Pickett
Tossed Salad, Chicken, Ham, Country Style Meatballs, Parsley Potatoes, Green Beans, Bread & Butter,
Sherbet or Ice Cream, Coffee & Tea

Mistress of Ceremonies..... Dr. Marian Comer, Trustee
Gary Public Library Board

Remarks.....Honorable Scott L. King, Mayor
City of Gary, Indiana

Gary Public Library.....Dharathula Millender, Trustee
Gary Community School Corporation Board

The Friends of the Gary Public Library.....Burnetta Williams, Chair
Friends Special Projects Committee

History of the Gary Public Library.....James B. Hibbard, Librarian
90th Anniversary Co-Chair
Gary Public Library

Special Presentation.....Rodney J. Lee, Director
Gary Public Library
Janet H. Guydon, Assistant Director
Gary Public Library

Introduction of Speaker.....Audrey Byrd, Trustee
Gary Public Library Board

E. Lynn Harris

Presentations
Friends Scholarship Recipients.....Mary Mulligan, Chair
Friends Scholarship Committee

Length of Service.....Charlotte Gordon Hull, Secretary
Gary Public Library Board

Acknowledgements/Remarks.....Dr. Marian Comer

Benediction.....Rev. Solomon Dye

Geneva Gamble

Only a few times in life does a person come along who is truly remarkable. Geneva Gamble is such a person and we at the Gary Public Library are honored to have her on staff. Currently serving as the Co-chairperson of the 90th Anniversary committee, Geneva also celebrated her 90th birthday this year.

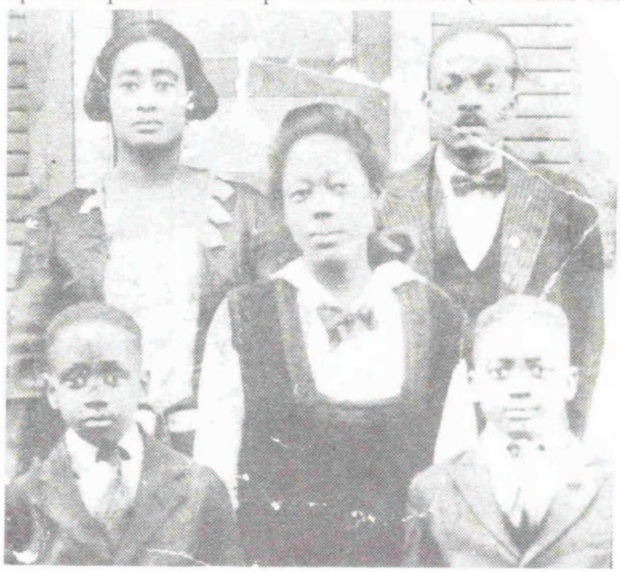


Since 1989, Mrs. Gamble has been working in GPL's Art & Public Affairs Department as a clerical aid. Her dedication to her job is an inspiration to the whole staff who affectionately regard her as our "grandmother."

As for herself, she loves working at the library and feels that "You don't have to let age stop you. If you have the will power, always say you can do it." And do it she does. Every day she goes about doing her job in a very quiet yet efficient way. Whether it is changing the letters on the library's daily announcement board, bringing each staff member birthday greetings, or just clipping library related articles out of the many local newspapers, you can see that she does it with dedication, pride and love.

Over the course of her life, she has had a myriad of experiences. The oldest of three children born to Arthur and Beulah Davis, she was born in a small house in Bastrop, Texas on March 19, 1908. Bastrop, a small town near Austin, was only a stop in the road at the time, with, as she recalls, "small gardens next to the houses, chickens in the yards, and water brought up from a well with a bucket."

She lived in Bastrop until 1920 when she moved with her family to Gary, where her father opened up a barber shop with his brother (the Davis Brothers Barber Shop). Once in Gary, Geneva went to school at the Virginia Street School and, later on, graduated from Froebel High School.



Pictured: Geneva Gamble at work (upper right)
Davis Family, Gary, IN 1922 (above)
front left to right: Floydell, Geneva, Preston
back left to right: Beulah, Arthur

It was during her formative years in Gary that her parents recognized that she had musical talents. Therefore, she took voice lessons and sang soprano. At one point, her father even purchased a piano for her to play.

She has many interesting memories of her life in early Gary. Her first exposure to libraries occurred in Gary. She still remembers going into the Alcott Branch Library as a young lady and reading. For a little more excitement, if she had 25 cents to spare, she would hop the Gary streetcars and ride into Chicago on Sundays. Religion has also been a large part of her life; she has attended the First AME Church since the 1920's, when it "was only a basement church." She has been married twice. From the first union she gave birth to twin sons, one of whom gave his life for his country in the Korean War.

Gary Public Library is truly blessed and honored to have Mrs. Gamble on staff and proud to have her as its 90th Anniversary Committee Co-Chairperson.

Gary Public Library Staff

ADMINISTRATION
Rodney J. Lee, *Director*
Janet H. Guydon, *Assistant Director*

ART & PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Maria Strimbu, *Head*
Geneva Gamble, *Clerical Aid*
Pamela Williams, *Library Assistant*

BUSINESS OFFICE
Virgil Savage, *Finance Manager*
Diana Alexander,
Executive Assistant
Julia Matthews, *Executive Assistant*
Jeanette McClain,
Accounting/Purchasing Assistant
Helen Wallace, *Payroll Assistant*

CHILDREN'S ROOM
Maryann Mrozoski, *Head*
Anne Paradise,
Children's Librarian
Jetta Lewis, *Library Assistant*
Rosalyn Archie, *Page*
Rhea Basemore, *Page*
Jamie Caston, *Page*

CIRCULATION
Roma Ivey, *Head*
Ernestine Jackson, *First Assistant*
Belinda Blackburn,
Library Assistant
Virgenmina Calo, *Library Assistant*
Florisha R. Harper,
Library Assistant
Terrella King, *Library Assistant*
Nancy Progre, *Library Assistant*
Willa Rhymes, *Library Assistant*
Kyla Parker, *Page*

EXTENSION
Kathleen Burgess, *Head*
Karen Blocker,
Bookmobile Librarian
James McNair, *Librarian*
Lorenzo Cockrell,
Bookmobile Driver/Library Assistant

EXTENSION - continued
Perry Gordon, *Driver/Maintenance*
Beverly Smith, *Library Assistant*

MAINTENANCE
Connie Pace, *Head*
Betty Baker, *Assistant Supervisor*
Sylvester Green, *Night Supervisor*
Leland Allison, *Custodian*
Maurice Davis, *Custodian*
Richard Gordon, *Custodian*
Sharon Y. Haley, *Custodian*
Harold Johnson, *Custodian*
Erwin C. Jones, *Custodian*
Robert L. King, Sr., *Custodian*
Frank McCloud, *Custodian*
Frank Tokarz, *Custodian*
Stanley Wilkes, *Custodian*
Ronald Woodard, *Custodian*

REFERENCE
Brenda Moore, *Head*
Kenneth Green, *Librarian*
James B. Hibbard, *Librarian*
Andrew Paradise, *Librarian*
Charie Gibson, *Library Assistant*
Charles Townsend,
Library Assistant
Richard Bournes, *Page*
Tiffany Collins, *Page*
LaKisha Grays, *Page*
Deona Joiner, *Page*
Keelan Mullin, *Page*
Katura Smith, *Page*
Fanie Stephens, *Page*
Jefferson Swagerty, *Page*

TECHNICAL SERVICES
Pamela Vance, *Head*
Frances Patterson,
Acquisitions Specialist
Margaret Burleson,
Library Assistant
Arlene Cohan, *Library Assistant*
Ruth Hoyle, *Cataloger*
Gloria Washington,
Library Assistant

DU BOIS BRANCH
Koku Lwanga, *Head*
Brenda Davis, *Children's Librarian*
Gracie Allen, *Library Assistant*
Dorothy Moore, *Library Assistant*
Benita Rhymes, *Library Assistant*
Oliver Crenshaw, *Page*
Lindsey Madry, *Page*

KENNEDY BRANCH
Dorothy Swain, *Head*
Patience Ojomo,
Children's Librarian
Jeanette Mosley, *Library Assistant*
Julie Murphy, *Library Assistant*
Ashley Farr, *Page*
Tiana Grant, *Page*
Deborah Pinkins, *Page*

TOLLESTON BRANCH
Diana Morrow, *Head*
Valerie Lee, *Children's Librarian*
Ana Perez, *Library Assistant*
Raelyna Harden, *Page*
Angel Thornton, *Page*

WILDERMUTH BRANCH
Samuel Custard, *Head*
Charlestine Lee,
Children's Librarian
Leora Carr, *Library Assistant*
Frances Johnson, *Library Assistant*
Neslie A. Davis, *Page*
Kelvyn Henderson, *Page*
Mecole Watkins, *Page*

SUBSTITUTE STAFF
Mary Bland
Richard F. Burgess
J.D. Caldwell
Fannie Clement
Audrey Harris
Aaron Haywood
Lillian Lewis
Sharon McGee
Mary Oppman
Arthur Pempleton

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TROY L. MONTGOMERY
PRESIDENT, LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL

Best Wishes to the
Gary Public Library
and the
Friends of the Gary Public Library

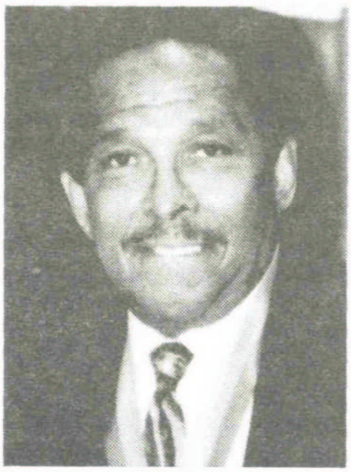
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Happy Anniversary
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and
The Friends of the Gary Public Library

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for forty years.

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AND MAY WE ENJOY
MANY MORE ANNIVERSARIES.

Idella G. Figgures - Chair
Brenda D. Moore - Vice-Chair

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Rev. Alla Phillips

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Betty Wilson

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Lavada Green

(1908 - AND ONWARD)

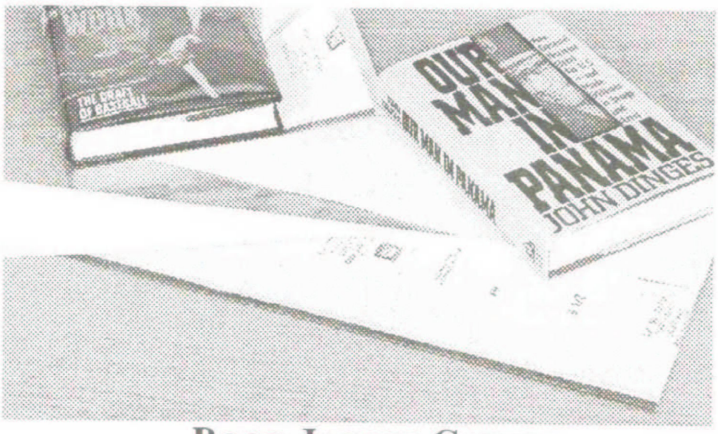
AS WE OBSERVE THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GARY PUBLIC LIBRARY, WE CAN LOOK BACK AND BE PROUD OF THE ROLE THAT THIS INSTITUTION HAS PLAYED IN THE LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITY. CONGRATULATIONS, AND MAY GOD BLESS YOU TO CONTINUE THIS EXEMPLARY WORK.

WE ALSO NOTE THE 40 YEARS OF COMMITMENT FROM THE "FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY". THIS DEDICATED MEMBERSHIP HAS DEMONSTRATED A DESIRE TO ACHIEVE A RICHER LIFE FOR A BETTER, MORE INFORMED COMMUNITY. MAY GOD CONTINUE TO SMILE UPON YOU.

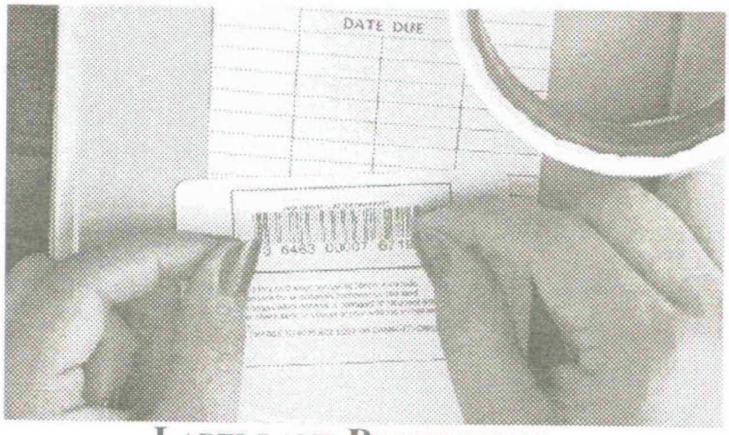
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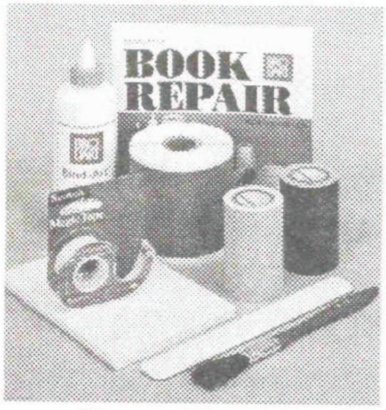
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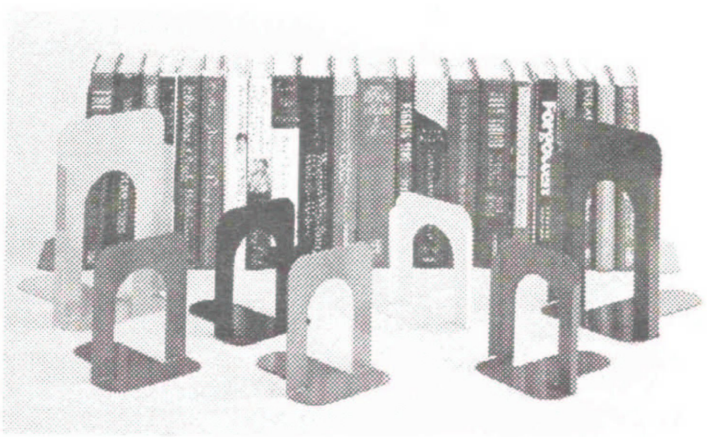
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Friday & Saturday.. .....9am-5pm

DU BOIS BRANCH 1835 BROADWAY 886-9120

Monday-Wednesday.....noon-8pm
Thursday.....10am-8pm
Friday & Saturday.....10am-5pm

KENNEDY BRANCH 3953 BROADWAY 887-8112

Monday-Wednesday.....noon-8pm
Thursday.....10am-8pm
Friday & Saturday.....10am-5pm

***TOLLESTON BRANCH 1113 TAFT STREET 944-2795**

Monday-Thursday.....10am-8pm
Friday & Saturday.....10am-5pm
** Extended Hours*

WILDERMUTH BRANCH 501 S. LAKE STREET 938-3941

Monday-Wednesday.....noon-8pm
Thursday.....10am-8pm
Friday & Saturday.....10am-5pm